

Public Health and Risk Communication

- **Risk communication: controversial, critically important, high risk, or emergency situations in which you must deliver your agency position to media and public.**
- **Anytime you would with the media, it should be considered risk communication.**
- **Risk communication is not restricted to major disasters; it is any event that causes public concern and creates media attention that will be focused on your agency. (Refer to afternoon scenarios as examples):**
 - **--Battleground Lake trout situation**
 - **--Certificate of Need decision on hospital facilities in Clark County**
 - **--Flesh-eating bacteria case in local hospital**
- **Bad communication adds to the crisis; conflicting messages, slow response, media speculation, public health jargon.**
- **Good risk communication is good communication – these tools can help you communicate your messages to your local politicians, board of health, and your mother.**

Risk vs. Crisis Communication

- **Crisis communication occurs when there is an emergency – a crisis that has actually occurred – that you must handle.**
- **Risk communication includes non-emergencies.**
 - **You may consider ANY contact with a reporter, lawmaker, or member of the public to be a risk communication situation.**
- **Risk communication skills and techniques are used to handle both risk and crisis situations.**